

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSC-01

EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-07 /076 W

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R 021728Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4604

INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 25612

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR FR PL

SUBJECT: POLISH VIEWS OF THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT

BEGIN SUMMARY: ON SEPTEMBER 1 A POLISH EMBASSY OFFICER DESCRIBED HIS EMBASSY'S PRELIMINARY VIEW OF WHAT THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT MEANS FOR INTERNAL FRENCH POLITICS. CHIRAC WAS CORRECT IN THINKING THE UDR WOULD PROFIT FROM EARLIER ELECTIONS, BUT GISCARD WAS ALSO CORRECT IN THINKING HE WOULD BENEFIT FROM EFFORTS TO MOVE THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY FURTHER TO THE CENTER-LEFT. GISCARD MAY BE ABLE TO ATTRACT TO THE CURRENT MAJORITY GROUPING ENOUGH VOTES TO KEEP THE NOW UNITED LEFT FROM CONTROLLING THE ASSEMBLY. THE POLES BELIEVE MITTERRAND WILL HAVE TO APPROACH THE CENTER IN ORDER TO GOVERN, BECAUSE THE ELECTORAL ALLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNISTS WOULD BREAK DOWN OVER QUESTIONS OF POWER SHOULD THE LEFT WIN IN THE 1978 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. GISCARD AND MITTERRAND COULD THEREFORE WORK OUT A MODUS VIVENDI. THE POLES PREFER GISCARD WITH HIS CURRENT MAJORITY OVER A GREATER ROLE FOR MITTERRAND, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT BELIEVE EVEN GISCARD'S FALL-BACK POSITION WILL

NOT HURT FRANCO-POLISH RELATIONS. THE POLES HOPE THE GERMANS AND AMERICANS WILL HELP GISCARD TO STRENGTHEN HIS POSITION AT THE POLLS IN 1978 BY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO A POLISH EMBASSY OFFICER, THE POLISH EMBASSY HERE BELIEVES THAT THE RECENT CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT REFLECTS THE DIFFERING VIEWS OF PRESIDENT GISCARD AND PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC OVER THE EVOLUTION OF FRENCH INTERNAL POLITICS, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN NOW AND THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS OF 1978. CHIRAC CLEARLY THOUGHT THAT THE ELECTORAL STRATEGY WHICH WOULD SERVE THE UDR (AND HENCE CHIRAC) WAS A SHARP ATTACK ON "SOCIALISM". THE POLES THOUGHT CHIRAC ALSO ESTIMATED THAT AS TIME PASSED, THIS STRATEGY MIGHT BECOME INCREASINGLY INEFFECTIVE, HENCE THE NEED, FROM CHIRAC'S POINT OF VIEW, FOR ELECTIONS FAIRLY SOON, WELL IN ADVANCE OF 1978. THE POLES SEE THE UDR AS A PARTY GRADUALLY ERODING ALONG WITH DE GAULLE'S FADING SHADOW. THEY THEREFORE THINK THAT CHIRAC'S STRATEGY WOULD AT THE BEST PROVIDE A BRIEF RELIEF; GISCARD'S ELECTORAL STRATEGY IS CLOSER TO THE REALITIES OF FRENCH POLITICAL EVOLUTION THAN CHIRAC'S.

2. WHILE THE POLES FIND CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF GISCARD'S STRATEGY STILL NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR, THEY THINK HE CLEARLY WISHES TO MOVE TOWARD THE CENTER-LEFT BECAUSE HE PERCEIVES THIS IS THE TENDENCY OF THE FRENCH ELECTORATE. IF THE CURRENT MAJORITY CAN ACQUIRE ENOUGH OF THE VOTES BY MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION, SO MUCH THE BETTER. IF NOT, GISCARD WISHES TO BE IN A POSITION TO WORK OUT A MODUS VIVENDI WITH MITTERRAND. THE POLES BELIEVE THAT MITTERRAND WILL CONTINUE TO CONSIDER THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO GAIN AND MUCH TO LOSE THROUGH ANY CHANGE IN HIS ELECTORAL STRATEGY THAT WOULD DEPRIVE HIM OF THE COMMUNIST SUPPORT. THE POLES BELIEVE THAT COMMUNIST POPULARITY AND THEREFORE STRENGTH AT  
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THE POLLS HAS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO DECREASE, BUT THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MITTERRAND'S MAJORITY. MITTERRAND

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WILL THEREFORE RETAIN HIS ALLIANCE WITH THE COMMUNISTS THROUGH THE ELECTIONS, AND FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS HE COULD WELL OPT FOR AN ALLIANCE WITH GISCARD AND THE CENTER ON MUCH BETTER TERMS.

3. THE POLES BELIEVE THAT JUST AS GISCARD IS MOVING TO THE LEFT, MARCHAIS AS WELL AS MITTERRAND ARE MOVING TO THE RIGHT. THEY CONSIDER THAT THE VARIOUS DOCTRINAL MODIFICATIONS IN THE PCF LINE ARE NOT MERELY TACTICAL, BUT REPRESENT FUNDAMENTAL AND IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES, AND THAT THERE WILL BE MORE CHANGES IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. NONETHELESS, MARCHAIS WILL CONTINUE TO BE IN A WEAKENED POSITION, A POOR THIRD TO GISCARD AND MITTERRAND. THE POLES DO NOT YET SEE WHAT KIND OF A ROLE HE WILL BE ABLE TO WORK OUT FOR HIMSELF FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS, BUT IT WILL NOT BE SO STRONG A ROLE AS CONTAINED IN THE COMMON PROGRAM.

4. THE POLE ALLOWED AS HOW A VICTORY FOR MITTERRAND  
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WOULD NOT BE VERY FAVORABLE FOR POLAND. GISCARD'S RELATIONS WITH POLAND HAVE BEEN VERY GOOD AND HIS POLICY TOWARD THE EASTERN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY POLAND, HAS BEEN HELPFUL. ON THE OTHER HAND IN HIS TRIPS TO EASTERN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY HUNGARY, MITTERRAND HAS SUPPORTED GOVERNMENTS IN TERMS WHICH SEEM TO PRAISE THE SOVIET INFLUENCE AND UNDERCUT TENDENCIES TOWARD GREATER INDEPENDENCE. IN ADDITION, THE POLES ARE CONCERNED BY WHAT THEY SEE AS THE OPPORTUNISM OF MITTERRAND AND MANY OF THE MEMBERS OF HIS IMMEDIATE ENTOURAGE, PARTICULARLY JAQUET, MITTERRAND'S SHADOW FOREIGN MINISTER. THE POLES WOULD THEREFORE BE JUST AS PLEASED IF GISCARD WERE ABLE TO SCRAPE BY AT THE POLLS WITH HIS "NEW MAJORITY", ATTRACTING MORE SUPPORT FROM THE CENTER-LEFT. THEY ARE APPARENTLY PLEASED, HOWEVER, THAT GISCARD'S STRATEGY APPEARS ALSO TO PROVIDE A FALLBACK POSITION IN CASE THE SOCIALISTS, IN COMBINATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS, WIN THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

5. THE POLE THOUGHT THAT IT REMAINED VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY GERMANY, TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT GISCARD AND HIS POLITICAL PROGRAM PRIOR TO THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM GERMANY AND FROM THE UNITED STATES COULD MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO GISCARD/BARRE PLANS TO IMPROVE THE FRENCH ECONOMY, THEREBY AUGMENTING GISCARD'S CHANCES AT THE POLLS.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE POLE HAS IN THE PAST GENERALLY BEEN FAIRLY OPEN, WE WERE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT HIS FRANKNESS, PARTICULARLY IN HIS CRITICISM, DIRECT AND IMPLIED, OF THE FRENCH LEFT. WE WERE ALSO STRUCK BY THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN HIS ANALYSIS AND THAT OF MOST WESTERN OBSERVERS, INCLUDING OURSELVES.

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